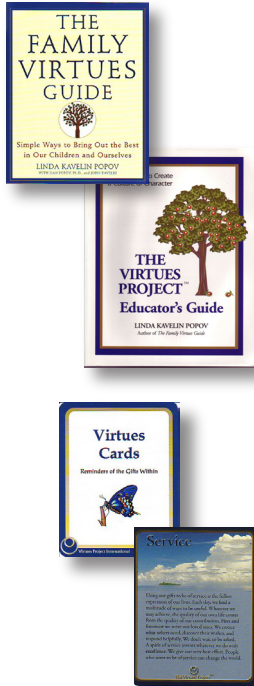




The Virtues Project

Family Virtues Resources

These are a few of the virtues resources to help awaken the gifts of character



The Family Virtues Guide

A book for the family to use together. Tools for parents raising children of idealism, responsibility, and kindness, in depth descriptions of the Five Strategies, and 52 Virtues with a definition, role plays, how to practice it and signs of success.

Virtues Project Educator's Guide

For parents, teachers and counselors to create a culture of character in our schools, day care centers and youth programs. Chapters on each of the Five Strategies of The Virtues Project with methods, examples, and character awakening activities and practices for Grades K - 12. Includes 52 Virtues honored by all cultures and traditions as "the best within us", success stories and sample activities from around the world.

Family Virtues Cards

For use in family sharing circles or for individual reflection. Each card has an inspirational quote, a brief description, signs of success and an affirmation.

Virtues Reflection Cards

This set of 100 cards features photographs of natural beauty from around the globe. They are written for teens and adults to use in daily reflection. A "Virtues Pick" either in a sharing circle or in our quiet time helps us to focus on cultivating the virtues more deeply.

For personal, professional and organizational development and to order Virtues Project materials contact:



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The Virtues Project



Raising Kind Kids

by Linda Kavelin Popov



**10 Questions
Caring Parents Ask**

**5 Strategies for Awakening
the Gifts of Character**



Parents are the first educators, those best able to impart values and virtues to their children. The world needs people who are willing to take personal responsibility. Let it be this generation.

THE FAMILY VIRTUES GUIDE



The Virtues Project

Dedication

This booklet is dedicated to Cassie Stoddart, whose kindness and optimism inspires us to create safe and caring communities.

The Virtues Project was founded in 1991 by Linda Kavelin Popov, Dr. Dan Popov and John Kavelin. It is a global grassroots initiative that inspires the practice of virtues in everyday life. The Project is a catalyst for the renewal of kindness, justice, and integrity in more than 85 countries and was honored by the United Nations during the International Year of the Family as a “model global program for all cultures”.

The Virtues Project has inspired and mobilized many thousands of families, educators, leaders and employees to commit acts of service and generosity, to heal violence with virtues, and to create safe and caring communities.

The Five Strategies are the signature contribution of The Virtues Project. They are based on the virtues that are universally valued by all people and cultures.

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Virtues Project International
www.virtuesproject.com

“I fully support The Virtues Project which promotes such universal values as love, kindness, justice and service. May you be successful in your endeavour?”

– THE DALAI LAMA

Virtues: The Gifts of Character

Assertiveness
 Caring
 Cleanliness
 Commitment
 Compassion
 Confidence
 Consideration
 Cooperation
 Courage
 Courtesy
 Creativity
 Detachment
 Determination
 Diligence
 Enthusiasm
 Excellence
 Flexibility
 Forgiveness
 Friendliness
 Generosity
 Gentleness
 Helpfulness
 Honesty
 Honor
 Humility
 Idealism



Integrity
 Joyfulness
 Justice
 Kindness
 Love
 Loyalty
 Moderation
 Modesty
 Orderliness
 Patience
 Peacefulness
 Perseverance
 Purposefulness
 Reliability
 Respect
 Responsibility
 Self-Discipline
 Service
 Tact
 Thankfulness
 Tolerance
 Trust
 Trustworthiness
 Truthfulness
 Understanding
 Unity



The Five Strategies

These strategies help us to live more authentic, purposeful lives, to raise children of compassion and idealism, and create a culture of character in our schools and communities.

Strategy 1: Speak the Language of Virtues

Language has the power to discourage or to inspire. Using virtues to acknowledge, guide, correct and thank awakens the best within us.

Learning Activity: Discuss the Strength Virtues of your family and the Growth Virtues you want to work on. Share what virtues you feel would make the biggest difference.

Strategy 2: Recognize Teachable Moments

Recognizing the virtues needed in daily challenges helps us to become lifelong learners open to the lessons of character.

Learning Activity: Ask “What is the Teachable Moment for our family now?”

Strategy 3: Set Clear Boundaries

Boundaries based on respect and restorative justice create a climate of peace, cooperation, and safety in our homes, schools and communities.

Learning Activity: Together, create an “Our Family” motto on a poster. Keep it short, positive, and present tense. Example: “The Jones family is a peace zone. We treat each other, our belongings and our home with care and respect.”

Strategy 4: Honor the Spirit

We sustain our vision and purpose by integrating virtues into our activities, surroundings, celebrations and the arts.

Learning Activity: Create a simple service project for your family to do together.

Strategy 5: Offer Companionship

Being deeply present and listening with compassionate curiosity guides others to find clarity and to create their own solutions. It supports healing and growth.

Learning Activity: Ask yourselves “What needs to be heard in our family?” Take a walk or drive and ask “what” and “how” questions. End with a virtues acknowledgment.

“I have seen so many programs come and go. They’re all Band-aids. The Virtues Project is penicillin. It’s the cure!”

– LUCINDA FESS, MAYOR OF PIQUA, OHIO

Introduction

When we first look into our baby’s eyes, we are filled with tender hope for them, and anything seems possible. We want to keep them safe forever. Being a parent is one of the most important jobs we will ever have.

Nobody bringing home that little newborn bundle plans to fail. We are raising the next generation. We are the mentors of our children’s character and the greatest influence on their self-esteem and their happiness.

From Violence to Virtues

Yet, these are troubled times for parents and children, with many powerful influences beyond our control. Kids are bombarded by images of violence merged with heroism. Bullying is a constant challenge, even in our best schools. What can we do to turn the tide?

Violence is a symptom, and meaninglessness is the disease. Every culture and belief teaches that the meaning of life springs from the virtues of our character, such as respect, compassion, excellence, and purposefulness.

Awakening Idealism

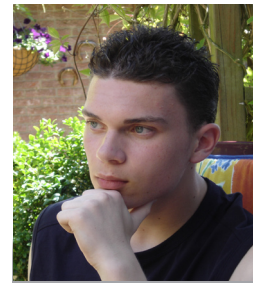
Awakening the virtues is a lifelong process. Between ages 12 to 24, one of the strongest emerging virtues is Idealism – the need to make a difference, to make one’s mark, to be somebody, to develop a sense of personal power. When there is a failure of hope, a loss of meaning, or misplaced value on the use of power, that idealism can turn into violence.

We need tools for cultivating our children’s idealism and other virtues in positive ways. This booklet offers simple strategies for parents raising kids of kindness, optimism, and a strong sense of purpose. Our future depends upon it.

All the best,

Linda Kavelin Popov

CO-FOUNDER, THE VIRTUES PROJECT



Power
+ Control
= Violence

Power
+ Responsibility
+ Compassion
= Leadership



10 Questions Caring Parents Ask

“How to instill ‘do the right thing’ virtues in your children. Parents are always saying children don’t come with a guidebook. This is one. This helps you to get them on the right track of leading a good life.”

– OPRAH WINFREY
during Linda Kavelin Popov’s appearance on the Oprah show

1. How do I raise my child to have good character?

We have great power to shape our children’s character in the way we speak to and about them. Using Virtues Language to acknowledge them and correct them tells them they are good people capable of giving their best. We need to treat our children as champions in the making.

Tip #1: Catch them in the act of committing a virtue, and name it: *“It took courage to go on that high slide for the first time.”* *“Good determination with that math assignment.”*

2. How do I keep from spoiling my child?

Nurture authentic self-esteem based on good character. Real happiness depends on it. Be like the coach of a star athlete. Expect the best. They’ll rise to the challenge. Over-indulging their material desires, overprotecting, overpraising, or making excuses undermines their character. It gives them a false sense of entitlement.

Tip #2: Focus on their Growth Virtues as well as their Strength Virtues. Give a Virtues Correction when negative behavior occurs. *“Be peaceful, Mary, even when you’re mad. Use your voice, not your hands.”* Acknowledge any sign of progress. *“Mary, you’ve been more peaceful today. Two arguments instead of seven.”*

3. What if I see my child being cruel?

Good children sometimes do bad things. They continually explore the boundaries. Children sometimes lie, steal, or hurt each other. It is also in their nature to be truthful, kind, and peaceful, when we call them to the Teachable Moment with a virtue.

Tip #3: Avoid using shaming labels or name-calling, such as “mean”, “stupid”, or “crazy.” Take a breath of detachment and give them a virtues-based boundary. *“If you want your friend to stay, you need to be kind to him. Take a minute alone to think about how you can be kind.”*

4. What do I do if my child is a bully? Is it my fault?

Children model after individuals and even characters they find powerful and “cool”. Media immerses them in images of violence as heroism. Be a model of peacefulness in your own speech and actions. Monitor TV, music and other media. Explore if something is troubling them. Let them know you believe they can turn themselves around by using their virtues.

Tip #4: Spend quality time. Listen to their point of view. Explore ways they can make amends for aggressive behavior. Acknowledge positive change with a specific virtue such as self-discipline or peacefulness.

5. What is a healthy way for me to discipline my child?

Be a mentor, not a tormentor. Power struggles, tears and guilt lectures don’t work. Clear boundaries based on restorative justice do. Be assertive and clear about family ground rules. Give consequences that are educative, not punitive, such as staying home Friday night for failure to keep curfew. Be absolutely consistent about enforcing consequences.

Tip #5: When anyone in the family violates a ground rule, give them an opportunity to make amends. This restores justice and restores them to the family circle.

6. What influence do I have in the teen years?

Your influence is directly proportionate to the quality of your relationship with your teen. Spend time having fun, recreation, and lots of bedside talks. With boys especially, walking shoulder to shoulder somehow gets them talking more than face to face. Establish boundaries that they feel are fair, and have them participate in creating consequences.

Tip #6: Become a world class listener. The secret is to ask non-judgmental open-ended questions starting with “What?” and “How?” “What hurts?” “What is the hardest part of this?” “Why” puts them on the defensive. “What” helps them to get to the heart of the matter.

7. How do I keep from losing my temper?

Take good care of yourself! The more peaceful and happy you feel, the more patience you will have to navigate the many Teachable Moments for you and your child. Keep a pace of grace. Balance work, play, and time for yourself with family responsibilities. Everyone in the family needs to share responsibility for chores.

Tip #7: When you feel angry or frustrated, take a deep breath and call on your compassion and detachment. If you need to physically detach by walking away, say *“I’ll be back to deal with this. I need to find my patience.”*

8. What is the best way to work with my child’s teachers?

Be a cooperative collaborator focused on both your child’s Strength Virtues and their Growth Virtues. Never get defensive. Listen with respect and also expect respect for your child. Be assertive, but not aggressive.

Tip #8: Be proactive in asking teachers what they appreciate about your child and how they feel your child needs to improve.

9. How do I respond in a helpful way to grief and loss in our family or community?

When any of us is going through trauma or grief, we need two things: compassionate presence and freedom to talk about it as often as we need to, without being “talked out of it”. Companionship is a simple and powerful tool in this process.

Tip #9: It can be very healing to sit with others in a sharing circle with receptive silence and no interruption, to share feelings and thoughts. When each person finishes, others acknowledge their caring, their courage or another virtue. This is deeply restorative.

10. How can I assure my child’s success in life?

Your part is to give them roots by mentoring the virtues of their character. Their part is to find their own wings. Their self-confidence rests on feeling valued, loved, respected and liked by you. Appreciate them and expect the very best from them. Give them ample responsibility, affection, and family fun as well.

Tip #10: Observe your child’s natural talents and be their biggest fan and supporter.